

Aspen Environmental Group

The premier environmental assessment firm
for energy and infrastructure projects.

Overview

One of the key requirements of both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) is the development of mitigation measures to eliminate or minimize the significant environmental impacts that could result from proposed projects.

These regulations have placed a responsibility upon public agencies to assure adequate and enforceable mitigations are developed and implemented for these projects.

Though the environmental documents prepared under these laws generally contain numerous mitigation measures, their successful implementation in the field and under construction conditions has varied considerably. While some applicants do an excellent job of implementing these measures, others do not pay enough attention to assure avoidance of significant impacts and the resulting legal repercussions.

In response, public agencies have recently begun to formally monitor how effectively applicants implement these measures in the field. This active monitoring has resulted in a dramatic increase in compliance.

Aspen is at the forefront of these activities. Our personnel have developed many realistic and implementable measures for a variety of projects. Our monitoring staff have field and construction experience and understand not only the intricacies of regulations but also the realities of field conditions.

Aspen can provide all of these specialized services remotely or with long-term temporary staff, on-site or in the office. This brochure describes a variety of specific ways in which Aspen can help public agencies ensure successful implementation of mitigation measures.

For more information on Aspen,
see our website at
<http://www.AspenEG.com>
or call Vida Strong at
818-597-3407, x 301

An introduction to our Environmental Compliance Monitoring & Permitting Support Services



Construction activities often necessitate lane closures and resultant traffic and business ingress/egress impacts. Aspen is experienced in the implementation of Traffic Management Plans for a variety of roadway networks.

Qualifications

Aspen Environmental Group has provided Environmental Monitors for the California Public Utilities Commission, California Department of Fish and Game, Army Corps of Engineers, and Angeles National Forest for a variety of projects ranging from major linear projects to resource specific activities. In addition, Aspen's Environmental Monitors have worked with numerous responsible agencies (federal, state, and local), as part of their coordination responsibilities for the Lead Agencies.

All of Aspen's Environmental Monitors have degrees in the biological, anthropological, or environmental sciences.



Aspen's staff has specialized education and participate in continuing education, ranging from special status species to erosion control.

Learn more
inside . . .

Services Aspen Provides

The following are examples of how Aspen can help with compliance monitoring and permitting support:

I. Compliance Monitoring

- ▶ Oversee compliance with the permit conditions set by federal, state and local agencies
- ▶ Develop detailed plans to implement adopted mitigation measures
- ▶ Coordinate with lead and responsible agencies regarding reporting and communication protocols
- ▶ Provide consistent interaction with the project proponent to develop uniform understanding of mitigation implementation criteria
- ▶ Implement protocols for unanticipated discovery of cultural resources
- ▶ Conduct technical review of pre-construction plans (e.g. erosion control plans and public notifications plans)
- ▶ Develop and maintain project distribution lists of inspection reports
- ▶ Design and write public and agency information updates (e.g. Newsletters)
- ▶ Develop and maintain website content presenting daily, weekly and monthly reports and maps
- ▶ Prepare Completion Report summarizing construction progress, mitigation measure implementation success, problems encountered, and recommendations for improvements.



While bore operations are proposed to avoid impacts to biological, hydrological, and/or cultural resources, “frac-outs” (release of drilling muds) often occur. Frac-out clean-up creates its own set of impacts requiring coordination with resources agencies to plan the clean-up. Aspen is experienced in the development and implementation of frac-out contingency plans to minimize impacts.



Aspen is providing staff support to the California Energy Commission for its permitting process and construction monitoring for at least 48 new power generation facilities throughout the state.

II. Permitting Support

Another important service provided to public agencies by Aspen is assistance for permitting processes. The kinds of support available ranges from application review, processing, development of permit conditions, and monitoring for permit compliance.

For instance, Aspen has provided staff support to the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Under tri-party agreements between CDFG, Aspen,



Construction activities are often proposed along roadway shoulders with resources near-by, such as the drainage ditch shown here that supports riparian vegetation.

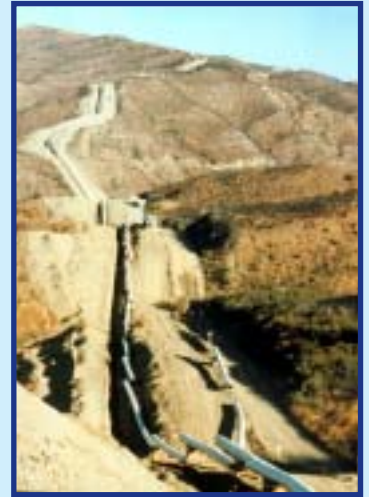
and the applicants, Aspen’s staff have processed the Streambed Alteration Agreement applications for numerous fiber optic and pipeline projects.

Aspen is also providing staff support to the California Energy Commission (CEC) for its Emergency and regular permitting process for new power plants throughout California. Aspen’s diverse staff expertise has been utilized for this effort, including biological, air, noise, traffic, geotechnical, and land use experts.

Over its ten year existence, Aspen has provided related services to a variety of agencies, including California Public Utilities Commission and the Army Corps of Engineers.

Aspen works with applicants and permitting/resources agencies to find alternative construction methods at sensitive resources.

Large and small scale construction projects often require implementation of extensive sediment and erosion control measures during construction and as part of restoration.



Find out how we can serve your needs.
Call Aspen at
818-597-3407, x 301



Large scale construction projects often require specialized mitigation and education programs to protect Threatened and Endangered Species, such as the Desert Tortoise.



- ▶ Desert tortoise mitigation monitoring at Twenty-Nine Palms Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, San Bernardino County
- ▶ Avian monitoring and vegetation mapping, San Luis Rey River, Oceanside
- ▶ Levee fill and parapet wall construction along the southern Los Angeles River

Recent Projects

This sample of recent projects demonstrates the wide variety of situations in which Aspen can help public agencies meet their obligations.

- ▶ Installation of Level 3 Communications 2,000-mile fiber optic network throughout California
- ▶ Construction of the 132-mile Pacific Pipeline, a crude oil line traveling from Kern County to the Los Angeles basin refineries
- ▶ Fiber optic construction at waterways under the jurisdiction of the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), Region 3, under tri-party agreements between CDFG, Aspen, and the applicants
- ▶ Construction of the 11-mile Valley Auld Transmission Line upgrade in Riverside County



Unanticipated discoveries of cultural resources often occur during construction. Aspen works with the applicant, agencies, and Native Americans (if applicable) to ensure the proper protocols are implemented.

- ▶ Construction of the 13-mile Santa Fe Pacific petroleum product pipeline through seven jurisdiction in urban Los Angeles County
- ▶ Pacific Gas & Electric transmission line, power line, and substation mitigation monitoring, northern California.

Bores often encounter problems other than frac-outs, such as misalignments and access issues. In these cases, Aspen works with the applicant and agencies to identify no- and low-impact solutions.



Construction activities often occur near residential and other sensitive land uses. As part of mitigation monitoring, Aspen ensures that the proper notifications and noise abatement measures are implemented.



What our clients have to say...

“Aspen monitors proved to be a valuable asset in helping the Department monitor and evaluate the impacts of the fiber projects in our jurisdiction. It has been, and continues to be, a pleasure to work with such dedicated staff, and I would highly recommend Aspen Environmental Group for similar projects in the future.”

Robert W. Floerke, Department of Fish and Game, Central Coast Region

“It is really an understatement to say that this project was very complex and controversial. Much of the affected public had become frightened, angry, and very distrustful before you or I became involved in the project. The proponent...made some major, abrupt changes during the course of the project. Through it all, your team adroitly adjusted to the changes, graciously won the respect of many doubtful members of the public, and consistently delivered timely, high-quality professional products and services.”

Terry Egenhoff, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service

“Originally, the Level 3 project was not well defined as far as the CPUC’s level of intervention was concerned. Aspen assisted the Commission staff with defining expectations and helped design a compliance and reporting format. ...Aspen’s field monitors were spread over hundreds of miles. Aspen provided first class environmental analysis and compliance monitoring at all times. If we gave grades to our consultants, Aspen certainly earned an “A” for this project. Not only did the firm meet professional expectations, but they were a pleasure to work with.”

John Boccio, California Public Utilities Commission,
Environmental Projects Unit, Energy Division

“I believe the Aspen team is committed to a high standard of performance. They were very responsive to the Energy Commission’s needs including submitting timely and professional technical documents, meeting stringent deadlines, making public presentations and providing testimony on their work, suggestion creative ideas to resolve issues, and providing a range of staff support from clerical to highly trained technical experts. Additionally, Aspen maintained a close working relationship with their subcontractors...I enjoyed working with (them)...and worked with them as though they were an extension of our staff.”

Sandra Fromm, California Energy Commission